

# 5 A Day for Young Children up to 2 Years of Age

## Working Toward 5 A Day

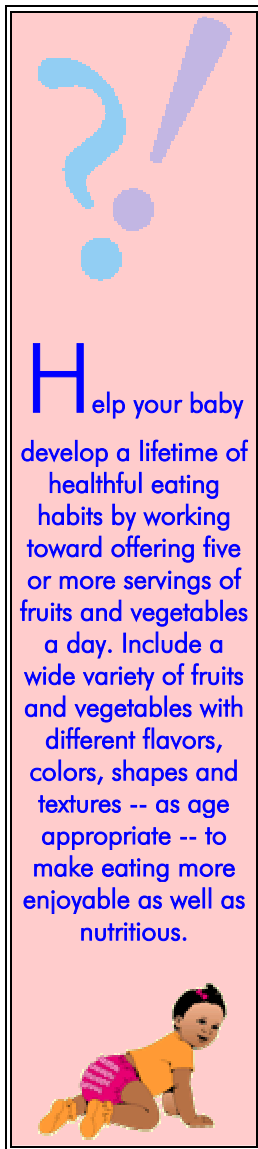
Dietary guidance to eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day for adults and children is found in the USDA's Food Guide Pyramid. When your baby is ready for solid foods, the 5 A Day principles can help you set a goal for offering a variety of fruits and vegetables each day, even if it's just a taste. Check with your physician or registered dietitian for guidance on when to start solid foods.

Often, during the transition to table foods, fruits and vegetables may be left behind in favor of easy-to-eat table foods. This is the time to shape eating habits that carry into later childhood, so eating 5 A Day becomes second nature.

It's important to emphasize that 5 A Day is a goal -- don't force a child who is not interested. Just keep trying. Make it fun. Make it colorful. Offer foods you may not like. Try not to bias your baby's fruit and vegetable preferences based on your own. An older baby or toddler may like them! A new fruit or vegetable may need to be offered several times before a baby accepts it. Be careful not to misread a baby's cues. A face that a baby makes may be saying, "What is this? It's new to me..." and not, "I don't like this." Let your baby's appetite drive the amount he eats. Watch her cues and offer what she wants; never force your baby to finish a whole jar or your toddler to "clean the plate."

## Essential Nutrients Provided by 5 A Day

Fruits and vegetables eaten each day provide many essential nutrients for babies and young children. Fruits and vegetables are two distinct food groups in the pyramid, but they provide many of the same nutrients. You can think of them together for young children. Vitamin A, vitamin C, folic acid, potassium and dietary fiber are examples of key nutrients found in a variety of both fruits and vegetables. If your toddler won't touch sweet potatoes, try cantaloupe. They're both excellent sources of vitamin A. Offering different kinds or combinations of fruits and vegetables help babies and toddlers learn to enjoy a wide variety and, at the same time, get all their healthful benefits.



## Easy Tips for Achieving 5 A Day Goal

- Convenience is key. Baby food in a jar is easy, safe, portable, nutritious and comes in appropriate portion sizes.
- Foods prepared at home as well as baby foods in a jar may help older babies and toddlers develop self-feeding and small motor skills.
- Be aware of choking risks. Prepare smaller amounts of food in forms easy to chew and swallow.
- Offer those first favorites like bananas or carrots to encourage kids to keep eating them while introducing new choices.
- Be creative. Design a forest of cooked broccoli tops, try strained peaches or mashed bananas on toast, or cover fingertips with raspberries.

## Key Nutrients Provided by Fruits or Vegetables

**Vitamin A** -- apricots, cantaloupe, mangos, carrots, spinach/dark greens, sweet potatoes

**Vitamin C** -- cantaloupe, oranges, strawberries, broccoli, potatoes, green peas, tomatoes

**Folate** -- strawberries, oranges, avocados, broccoli, spinach/dark greens, green peas

**Dietary Fiber** -- applesauce, mangos, pears, carrots, green beans, corn

## How Much is a Serving for Older Babies and Toddlers?

Fruit or Vegetable	Older Babies	Toddlers
Apple	1/2 jar or 1/4 cup applesauce	1/4 cup applesauce or apples cut in small pieces, diced
Avocado	1/4 cup softly mashed	1/4 cup mashed or cut in small pieces
Bananas	1/2 jar pureed or 1/4 cup softly mashed	1/2 jar pureed or 1/4 cup cut in small pieces
Carrots	1/2 jar pureed or 1/4 cup cooked, pureed	1/2 jar diced or 1/4 cup softly cooked, diced
Green Beans	1/2 jar pureed or 1/4 cup cooked, pureed	1/2 jar diced or 1/4 cup cooked until soft, diced
Peas	1/2 jar pureed 1/4 cup cooked, pureed	1/2 jar diced or 1/4 cup cooked until soft
Sweet Potatoes	1/2 jar pureed or 1/4 cup baked, softly mashed or pureed	1/2 jar pureed or 1/4 cup baked, mashed or diced
100% fruit or vegetable juice	4-6 ounces a day	4-6 ounces a day

1 jar=4 ounces